Athol Nov 30th 1830

Brother Phelps

I thought you had "forgotten to be gracious," until your tardy letter came along last week. However, "better late than never," thought I. As you wished for a prompt reply, I now show you how punctual I can be. These are + first lines I have written for 4 days; I have brought my strength down a little by excessive labor; have been bled &c for + first time in my life; feel rather sober, & think I wont joke you any about your new & strange situation in life. I wd however congratulate you in regard to + precious pearl you have lately found. May she prove as invaluable as + one described in + last chapter of + Proverbs of + wise Man. I hope you will evermore realize + truth of Solomon's remark, "whoso findeth a" good "wife, findeth a good thing, & obtaineth favor of + Lord". I rejoice to hear of + commenced revival among your peo-. On + season now before you, may depend + fact, whether Hopkinton is, during a generation to come,

I expect to leave for Boston next week on Thursday. Send me a letter there soon. If I shd not return here, I may be able to visit you in Jany, & labor with you a little. I shd like it to be divided by Unitarians. In Royalston, a wealthy town adjoining Athol, a few leading Unitarians have within a few years boasted, th. soon they shd sweep the town. But the Lord has within a few months been sweeping the town with the renovating influence of his Spirit, & doing it in a very still & wonderful manner. A large number of parents are among the recent converts; some Unitarians of very stout hearts have been humbled & renovated. The foundations of orthodoxy seem to be laying there for another, if not for many generations. Thus may it be with your Society. As for orthodoxy in Athol, it seems to be stemming the current of prejudice & opposition well. The Evangelical Socy continues to grow. It now numbers almost 90 members. Some of the Unitarians are so mad with me, I understand some of them say they wish a "bullet was put thro' me". Oh! they hoped & expected the whole town wd join in settling a preacher of smooth things, who wd cry peace to worldlings, universalists infidels &c. Our town house is filled almost to overflowing; we have had nearly 300 persons present of late, whereas the other society probably has had only about 200.

Many reports have of course been in circulation; true there has been much to divert + attention of my peo- from religion as a personal concern. Yet I have labored to make + peo- think about their own danger & wants, & attend to their own duties. The state of religion has every week been becoming more interesting. There has been little else than a succession of changes since I came here. The foundations needed to be laid: prejudice removed, habits changed, views enlightened &c. "Hitherto + Lord hath helped us." My soc.y bear new things pretty well, & begin to like changes very much. Our sab-school is now nearly as large again as it was when + 2 soc.s were united. It now numbers towards 125; & includes most of + old & young who tarry at noon. My biblical lect sab-eve.g [illegible] very fully attended; many of + Unitaria i come out to it. We have for several weeks been cheere with + news of conversions among + peo-. From 15 to 20 are already indulging hopes of a radical moral change in their character of late. There are probably about as many more somewhat anxious. 13 stand propounded for admission to + ch. next sab-, 5 of them are male heads of families. Several of + 13 were hopefully pious long before I came here, but w.d not join this ch-, with + dark prospects then before it as to Unitarianism. The first young ladies in town are among + hopeful converts & + anxious. But interesting as + state of things now is, I am under an engagement to leave the peo- next week. The committee in Berlin wd not let me alone, but renewed the invitation for me to preach to them, & some ministers around urged so hard, I took the matter into consideration. I must then decide soon. For various reason wh- I have not room here to state I told them I wd come & stay 4 weeks as they wished. I thought it probable then th- the state of religion wd become very interesting here & I shd be reluctant to leave. & so it is. Altho' I have ever been unwilling to settle so soon, yet the socy have against my choice been giving me a call; if possible to get me away from Berlin when my time there is up. The society here think they may almost overset the other socy in 2 years. I suppose I might enjoy myself here. There are some very pleasant peo-. Several say they shall leave the other socy & sign off to other towns. That soc- is to settle a Cambridge student, next week. Each of the socs here offer 500 dollars, whereas formerly the whole town gave only 333 dollars. It is possible th- I may yet feel—

G. J. Tillotson

constrained to come back, & spend 2 or 3 years. However I think it not very probable. I have sent for the best man th- can be obtained from N.H. I shd like to have staid, till I had seen more fruit of my labors, more piety among the peo-, & until the revival here has renovated ev- heart. Yet the society here is united, is gathering courage & strength, & I trust they will prosper & triumph, if I do leave. They try to frighten me, th- they shall decline if I don't come back. But I think now is the time for them to settle one, two will stay

George J. Tillotson
Athol Nov 30th
1830.

Athol Dec. 2. 1830
12½

Revd Amos A. Phelps.
Hopkinton.
Mass

I expect to leave for Berlin next week on thursday. Send me a letter there soon. If I shd not return here, I may be able to visit you in Jany, & labor with you a little. I shd like it much, if it were possible. I suspect I must settle soon if I stay in N.E. & if I settle soon, the peo- I suppose will almost constrain me to get married. Then ah! me! whom shall I wed? I want one of the best girls in the land, if I have any. You ask me when I am to be married? I answer, "perhaps, when I find a lady as good as I just spoke of; of good features, a good disposition, a good [illegible] character, as well as a good intellectual & [illegible] christian character. My compliments to Mrs. P. [illegible] & my gratitude for her advice to "go & do likewise", with your [illegible] Yours Geo. J. Tillotson